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Globalization and interdependence: international migration and development

International Migration and Development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 58/208 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly decided to devote a high-level dialogue to international migration and development during its sixty-first session in 2006. The purpose of the high-level dialogue is to discuss the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to identify appropriate ways and means to maximize its development benefits and minimize its negative impacts. Additionally, the high-level dialogue should have a strong focus on policy issues, including the challenge of achieving the internationally agreed development goals.

The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixtieth session on the organizational details of the high-level dialogue. In its resolution 59/241 of 22 December 2004, the General Assembly recalled the decision to devote a high-level dialogue to international migration and development during its sixty-first session and reconfirmed that the Secretary-General would report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the organizational details of the high-level dialogue. Pursuant to those resolutions, the present report addresses the organizational details of the high-level dialogue.

The General Assembly, upon consideration of the present report, will set the dates for the high-level dialogue and decide on its organization of work, including the number and timing of plenary meetings and informal interactive meetings.

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I. Subject, purpose and content of the high-level dialogue

1. In its resolution 58/208 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly decided to devote a high-level dialogue to the theme of international migration and development in 2006 and requested the Secretary-General to report to it, at its sixtieth session, on the organizational details. In its resolution 59/241 of 22 December 2004, the General Assembly reconfirmed this request and that the high-level dialogue would be held during its sixty-first session. The present report provides the organizational details of the high-level dialogue, bearing in mind that, as General Assembly resolution 58/208 stipulates: "(a) the purpose of the high-level dialogue is to discuss the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to identify appropriate ways and means to maximize its development benefits and minimize its negative impacts; (b) the high-level dialogue should have a strong focus on policy issues, including the challenge of achieving the internationally agreed development goals; (c) round tables and informal exchanges are useful for dialogue; (d) the outcome of the high-level dialogue will be a Chairperson's summary, which will be widely distributed to Member States, observers, United Nations agencies and other appropriate organizations." (paragraph 10, resolution 58/208).

2. In resolution 59/241, the General Assembly recognized the important contributions that international and regional efforts, including by the regional commissions, can provide to the high-level dialogue. The Assembly also invited appropriate regional consultative processes and other major initiatives undertaken by Member States in the field of international migration to contribute to the high-level dialogue. In particular, the General Assembly took note of the establishment of the Global Commission on International Migration. The report of the Global Commission will be available in October 2005. The General Assembly may wish to take into account the recommendations made in that report in finalizing the arrangements for the high-level dialogue.

3. At the request of the General Assembly (resolution 59/241), the Secretary-General will prepare a comprehensive overview of studies and analyses on the multidimensional aspects of migration and development, including the effects of migration on economic and social development in developed and developing countries, and on the effects of the movements of highly skilled migrant workers and those with advanced education. That report will serve as a substantive input for the high-level dialogue.

4. The organizational details for the high-level dialogue on international migration and development proposed in the present report are largely based on the established practices of other recent high-level meetings of the General Assembly.

II. Participation

A. Member States and observers

5. As in other high-level meetings of the General Assembly, the high-level dialogue would be open to participation by Member States, the Holy See, in its capacity as Observer State, and Palestine, in its capacity as observer, and intergovernmental organizations and other entities having received a standing

invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and work of the General Assembly (A/INF/57/4), in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Assembly. Accordingly, it is expected that the International Organization for Migration would be invited to the dialogue.

6. In addition, in the light of the provisions of resolution 59/241 referred to in paragraph 2 above, the Assembly may consider inviting representatives of relevant institutional stakeholders, that is, representatives of or spokespersons for regional intergovernmental consultative processes and the Global Commission on International Migration.

7. Member States should be encouraged to participate in the high-level dialogue at the ministerial level.

B. Other institutions

8. Relevant entities of the United Nations system would be invited to the high-level dialogue. The General Assembly may wish to encourage those entities to be represented at the highest level.

9. In recognition of the important contributions that regional efforts can provide to the high-level dialogue on international migration and development, as noted in General Assembly resolution 59/241, the General Assembly may wish to encourage the participation of the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions of the United Nations.

C. Civil society and other stakeholders

10. Civil society and other stakeholders, including the business sector, can make valuable contributions to a dialogue on international migration. Owing to space limitations at United Nations Headquarters, the broad participation of civil society in the dialogue itself may not be possible. In other high-level meetings of the General Assembly civil society has organized special consultations or hearings prior to those meetings. If such consultations or hearings were to take place, the General Assembly could invite representatives of civil society and representatives of the business sector to participate in the dialogue by reporting on the consultations or hearings.

III. Organizational arrangements

11. The high-level dialogue would consist of plenary meetings and informal interactive meetings, including round tables. A dialogue of two-day duration is necessary to accommodate the active participation of all Member States and other stakeholders. In particular, at least two plenary meetings[1] need to be programmed to accommodate the number of official statements expected.

12. To facilitate participation at the highest level, the high-level dialogue could be held at the beginning of the sixty-first session of the Assembly, which is scheduled to start on 12 September 2006. The suggested dates for the dialogue are 14 and 15 September 2006.

13. The dialogue would start with a plenary session that would adopt the agenda, hear introductory statements by the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and proceed with statements from ministers and high-level officials. An informal interactive meeting devoted to a policy dialogue would then follow. It would be opened by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and would include two panel discussions on policy relevant issues. On the second day, five concurrent round tables would be held. The dialogue would conclude in the afternoon with a plenary meeting that would end with a concluding statement by the President of the General Assembly (see annex for a full programme).

14. Plenary meetings would thus occupy the first morning and the last afternoon of the high-level dialogue. Statements during the plenary meetings would be limited to five minutes, on the understanding that the limit would not preclude the distribution of more extensive texts and that the principle of precedence would be strictly applied to accord priority to participation at the ministerial level.

15. During the first afternoon of the dialogue, an informal interactive meeting devoted to a policy dialogue would be held. Participation in the informal interactive meeting would be open to Member States and observers, other accredited institutions and representatives of civil society and the business sector.

16. To allow a free-flowing, interactive discussion during the informal interactive meeting, no list of speakers would be established. All participants would be invited to speak from their seats and would be strongly encouraged to avoid reading from written statements. Representatives of civil society and representatives of the business sector, selected by accredited participants among themselves, would be invited to speak on behalf of each group (see paragraph 10 above).

17. As part of the informal interactive meeting, two panel discussions focusing on ways of enhancing the response of the United Nations system to the challenges posed by international migration would be organized. One panel would focus on relevant international instruments and their role in enhancing the benefits of migration and the other would focus on the role of international migration in achieving the internationally agreed development goals. Panellists would include heads of relevant entities of the United Nations system.

18. On the second day of the high-level dialogue, five round tables would be held concurrently to permit focused discussion of selected issues. Participation in the round tables would be open to Member States and observers and to entities of the United Nations system and other relevant institutional stakeholders (see paragraph 6 above).

19. To promote interactive participation in the round tables a limit on the number of participants would have to be set. The overall number of participants per round table could be limited to 50 or fewer, at least five of whom would be representatives of entities of the United Nations system and another five, representatives of other relevant institutional stakeholders. The list of participants in each round table would be established on a first-come, first-served basis.

20. The chairperson of each round table would be designated by the President of the General Assembly, after consultation with the regional groups, from among the ministers attending the high-level dialogue and with due regard for geographical representation.

21. The round tables would focus on policy issues that would be most likely to result in action to enhance the positive impacts of international migration on development or to reduce its negative consequences. The topics suggested are: (a) the effects of international migration on economic and social development; (b) the migration of highly skilled persons; (c) actions to improve the impact of remittances on development; (d) international cooperation to prevent and combat the trafficking in persons; and (e) institutional mechanisms to enhance international cooperation for the benefit of countries and migrants alike.

22. The substantive basis for the discussion in the round tables would be provided by the comprehensive overview of studies and analyses on the multidimensional aspects of migration and development being prepared by the Secretary-General (see paragraph 3 above). In addition, there would be two lead discussants per round table who would introduce the subject under discussion. The lead discussants would be designated by the President of the General Assembly on the basis of recommendations made by the Secretary-General.

23. The chairpersons of the round tables would be requested to submit to the President of the General Assembly summaries of their respective round-table discussions.

IV. Outcome of the high-level dialogue

24. As stipulated in resolution 58/208, the outcome of the high-level dialogue will be a Chairperson's summary (that is, the President's summary), which will be widely distributed to Member States, observers, United Nations agencies and other appropriate organizations. The General Assembly may wish to specify that the President's summary would include summaries of the round-table discussions and would be issued as an official document of the General Assembly.

V. Conclusions

25. **The high-level dialogue on international migration and development will provide a unique opportunity for the international community to set the foundation for enhanced international cooperation in addressing the multifaceted issues raised by the international movement of people. To make the most of that opportunity, it is suggested that the high-level dialogue be held at the start of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, on 14 and 15 September 2006.**

26. **It is also suggested that Member States be encouraged to participate in the high-level dialogue at the ministerial level. The General Assembly may also wish to encourage the engagement of other stakeholders at the highest possible level, such as relevant entities of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental institutions.**

27. **Regarding the organization of the high-level dialogue, the recommendations made in the present report are summarized in the programme presented as an annex. The dialogue would start with a plenary session that would adopt the agenda, hear introductory statements by the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social**

Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and proceed with statements from ministers and high-level officials. There would then be an informal interactive meeting devoted to a policy dialogue that would include two panel discussions on policy-relevant issues. On the morning of the second day, five concurrent round tables would be held. The high-level dialogue would then conclude with a plenary meeting in the afternoon that would be closed by the President of the General Assembly.

28. **It is suggested that the topics for the round tables be the following: (a) the effects of international migration on economic and social development; (b) the migration of highly skilled persons; (c) actions to improve the impact of remittances on development; (d) international cooperation to prevent and combat the trafficking in persons; and (e) institutional mechanisms to enhance international cooperation for the benefit of countries and migrants alike.**

29. **The outcome of the high-level dialogue will be the President's summary. In addition to requesting its wide dissemination, the General Assembly may wish to consider how best to use the outcome document to inform and buttress further decision-making on how to build an effective multilateral mechanism for cooperation in the field of international migration.**

Notes

[1] In the event that official statements could not be accommodated during those two plenary meetings, provisions would need to be made for additional night meetings.

Annex

Proposed programme of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (United Nations Headquarters, 14 and 15 September 2006)

Thursday, 14 September

Plenary meeting

10 a.m.-10.30 a.m.	Opening of the High-level Dialogue by the President of the General Assembly
	Organizational matters
	Statements by the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations
10.30 a.m.-1 p.m.	Statements by ministers and high-level officials

Informal interactive meeting

3 p.m.-5 p.m.	Policy dialogue opened by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders
5 p.m.-6 p.m.	First panel discussion

Friday, 15 September

Informal interactive meeting

9.30 a.m.-10.30 a.m.	Second panel discussion

Round tables

10.30 a.m.-1.30 p.m.	Five simultaneous round tables on different topics

Plenary meeting

3 p.m.-5.45 p.m.	Statements by ministers and high-level officials
5.45 p.m.-6 p.m.	Concluding statement by the President of the General Assembly